



THE GREATER BETHESDA-CHEVY CHASE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

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Our Only Business

VIA EMAIL AND MAIL

January 27, 2012

Beverly Swaim-Staley, Secretary
Maryland Department of Transportation
7201 Corporate Center Drive
Hanover, Maryland 21076

Re: 1/20/12 Letter of the 18th Legislative District Regarding Widening of SB Connecticut Avenue (MD 185) at Jones Bridge Road

Dear Secretary Swaim-Staley:

We are writing in response and objection to the letter of January 20, 2012 sent to you from Senator Rich Madaleno, Delegate Al Carr, Delegate Ana Sol Gutierrez, and Delegate Jeff Waldstreicher, recommending "postponing the proposed widening of southbound Connecticut Avenue (MD 185) between I495 and Jones Bridge Road."

As representatives of the business community of the Greater Bethesda-Chevy Chase area to the Montgomery County Base Realignment and Closure Implementation Committee (BIC), we strongly oppose the recommendations suggested in this letter. Ironically, five years ago this week, members of the BIC were appointed to serve on this committee by County Executive Leggett. For five years (and still counting) representatives from federal, state, local, civic, business and military groups served together in the planning process, preparing for the September 15, 2011 merger of the Walter Reed Army Medical Center with the National Naval Medical Center, and the effects this merger would have on the surrounding community. The hallmark of the BIC was a focus on the public good over individual interests.

Thousands of hours of study, review and meetings, and millions of dollars of federal, state and local government resources went into the final recommendations for improvements to the surrounding community. To recommend the postponement of the infrastructure work (with no supporting study or resource), undermines the efforts of the Maryland Department of Transportation and the dedication of the more than 30 members of the community who have worked closely together for years, focusing on the needed improvement to intersections that have been failing long before the BRAC decision was made in 2005.

We thank you for the continued involvement of the Maryland Department of Transportation with the planned improvements to the intersections surrounding Walter Reed and urge you to disregard the recommendations made by the District 18 representatives.

Sincerely,

Leslie Ford Weber, Chair
(Suburban Hospital)
Member, BIC representing Suburban Hospital

Ginanne M. Italiano, IOM
President & CEO, The Greater Bethesda-Chevy Chase Chamber
Member, BIC representing the B-CC Chamber

cc: Christopher Van Hollen, 8th Congressional District
Isiah Leggett, Montgomery County Executive
Melinda Peters, Director, Maryland State Highway Administration
Roger Berliner, Montgomery County Council President
Nancy Floreen, Chair of Montgomery County Council PHED Committee
Francoise Carrier, Chair of Montgomery County Planning Board
Art Holmes, Director, Montgomery County Department of Transportation
Ken Hartman, Director, Bethesda-Chevy Chase Regional Services Center
Ilaya Hopkins, Chair, Montgomery County BIC
Phil Alperson, Montgomery County BRAC coordinator
District 18 Delegation (Senator Rich Madaleno, Delegate Al Carr, Delegate Ana Sol Gutierrez, and Delegate Jeff Waldstreicher)